

REWRITE



The Magazine of Effective Writing

Vol. I No. 8.

AUGUST, 1950.

Twenty-five cents

WHAT DO YOUR MSS. TELL ABOUT YOU?

Every time you send a ms. to an editor, a message is conveyed to that editor. He can deduce a great many ideas about you because the tell-tale signs you leave scattered all over your property, form a pattern. It has been said by the cynically-minded that "you don't have to eat a whole orange to know it is rotten." Very few editors approach their job in that jaundiced frame of mind. It is just commonsense to realize that they go ahead in their profession according to whatever positive results they achieve, not for the number of sensitive writers they wound, or slap satistically in the face. The great Ray Long, onetime editor of COSMOPOLITAN, is still remembered wherever editors and writers gather. He dug up more new writers than almost any other editor of his day. He tried more new ideas and forms; he was a dangerous competitor because he had a creatively poised mind. He could read the signs and be guided by them.

The first thing that any editor observes, naturally, has to do with the physical form of your ms. If it is sloppy, runs off right hand edges of nearly every page, and if the misspelled words are commoner than one or two a page, is it any wonder that the editor is prejudiced into thinking that this ms. is a contribution by an illiterate? It may be the work of a genius. But for all of us editors and critics, who read our half-a-million or more words a year, year in and year out, the implications are unmistakable.

The second thing that any editor can tell with only a quick glance at any ms., is the general quality of it. An agent on my business acquaintanceship list and I were reading a ms. together. I had read it carefully a day or two previously. I knew it had some faults, but I also thought it was interesting in its conception. The agent looked over a page or two, seeking a salable property. "My gosh," he cried in anguish, "it has no style." At the time, I thought he was in a show-off mood and a bit hard on a second-rate writer. For I knew the author was selling in the very small magazines. But in the years that have followed, I have heard that phrase repeated a dozen times by editors or agents. I myself can tell almost with first words or sentences nine out of ten times if a ms. is salable or not. Alva has grown used to hearing me exclaim on rare occasions, "This one is good."

Make this test yourself. Go to any movie-house in the country. Don't look at the "3-sheet" billings or the glamorized stills in the foyer. Go into the darkened auditorium, preferably in the middle of a run-through. Watch the actors for performance only. You can tell almost every time which are good or coast on their reputations or influence. It

is then that you will notice style. The actor who, be he star or bit player, plays for the sake of the story, will stand out. The bored or self-important egoist will, too, but for a different reason. You can feel style.

On another page we have quoted an editor's injunction to think of the readers' needs & wishes, not the author's message. That's another thing that any editor can spot in the first paragraph or two. The professional is intent on putting over his idea, his reason for writing the piece clearly and visually. He does so in a workman-like manner without any wasted space or hoery circumlocutions.

The editor can tell almost every time the author tries to put something over on him. A writer brought me a ms. years ago, which he said a well known book publisher was interested in (present tense). It would have been a simple matter for me to call up the house and ask a friend if they were interested in a ms. entitled, "Adventure in the Maine Forests", (not the actual title). The title alone told me they were not (There is style, again! No first rate publisher of fiction, I believe, would be caught dead with such a title on his list).

I read the ms., however. I filed my report. When the author objected to my telling him it was an amateur job, I told him he was a liar; that the ms. was at least ten years old and offered proof with certain anachronisms he had not bothered to bring up to date. I told him if he continued to kid me, I would call up the publisher and prove my case. He came clean; he had written the ms. 10 years ago, and had submitted the ms. to an editor who was not only a personal friend, but also a client of the author, who was a stockbroker (not his real profession). The editor had been embarrassed to tears and had let the writer down gently.

The "true experience" is one of the easiest bases for a short story or novel to detect. There is a certain rigidity in plotting that quickly makes an experienced editor or prick up his ears. And then he begins to notice that everywhere the tendency of such a novel is always to be merely photographic. It is realistic instead of dramatic. Furthermore, it becomes increasingly true of one group only rather than universally meaningful. You begin to realize that because of a number of highly specialized conditions, or basic premises, the story could only happen in this one way. Remove one cornerstone and the whole story will topple to the ground. It is not a good lie; it does not come from the imagination, but rather from the memory of a too literal minded author.

There really is no substitute for telling the best story you can; telling it as imaginatively yet simply & emotionally as life!

REWRITE

Published Monthly by
Writers' Counsel Service, 30 West Street,
Lynnburg, Mass.

MAKE William E. Harris. OUR

THE U.N. Elva Ray Harris. ONLY ENEMY

STRONG! Editors. IS—FEAR!

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: 25c. per copy, \$2.00 per year in advance anywhere in the world. Copyright, August, 1950. Reproduction without authority from and credit to the editors forbidden.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS—we cannot be responsible for changes not received in this office ONE MONTH in advance of taking effect. Whenever possible, please give exact date of change. PROMPT RENEWALS help us to serve you better.

URGE YOUR FRIENDS to BUY REWRITE. They will benefit, and so will you, from our ever expanding CENTRAL MS. MARKET FILE. No other book gives such accurate reportage on so individual and personal a basis to help you.

WE MUST MAKE UNITED NATIONS WORK!

Let no one kid you this is not—World War III. Call it a Cold War, Hot War of whatever you wish, the die is cast, the choice is waiting to be made: we, all of us, all over the world must choose either Freedom or Slavery. As the Great Emancipator declared ninety odd years ago, a nation or a world "half slave or half free" cannot long endure. We must be men or lose our birthright. The opportunity for a twilight world of fantasy and indecision, of live and let live has gone by forever. We must choose between the Communist way of life or that of all the nations, that believe in UNITED NATIONS, a strong and democratic family, or one dominated by a cantankerous, egocentric bully. Therefore, there really is no choice: the only direction is forward. We must stand firm for our belief.

The policy of the Soviets is clear. They are waging a war of attrition. They will not fight openly so long as they can egg us onto fight their satellites. They already possess the advantage of sheer numbers; if they can persuade us to waste our substance, and our strength killing and being killed by satellites, whom they would gladly—slip from the face of the earth, so that the eventual booty for their few at the top will be greater, it will be some old booby-trap game of cat-and-mouse. They will continue to make use of the democratic processes so long as we let them and these serve their purposes.

To slay an octopus, you must strike at the heart, not slash futilely at the innumerable arm-like feet. We have been winning Pyrrhic victories and losing the ideological war between decency and human dignity on the West and human indecency and all that is morally

despicable on the East. Our civilization is not perfect; it is far from the spirit of a democracy we preach. But between the worlds of slaves and free men there is not, never has been, and never will be any comparison.

We must take the offensive! It is irrevocably clear that we must prove to the Soviets once and for all physically, mentally, morally and spiritually that it's one world, a clean, fresh world of light and human warmth and kindness. We must prove to them in the unmistakable language of human strength, the only language that they know, that the complete weight of the UNITED NATIONS' world is irresistably set against them. They can pursue whatever corporate national life they desire. But the peace of the world is not to be jeopardized every few years by war. With or without them, the UNITED NATIONS is continuing to be the effective and orderly forum, the friendly meeting place of neighborly nations.

Had Secretary Dean Acheson written a fresh Monroe Doctrine instead of delivering stale month-old platitudes at the Harvard Commencement, he would have won the plaudits and the active support of the entire free world. He would have written, too, a new Magna Charta in man's long struggle for freedom and true dignity of the human spirit. And he very possibly might have prevented the Korean debacle. Now the same human rights will have to be earned in terms of human blood. And let none of us underestimate the cost, or the need to make the terms of the settlement explicitly, irrevocably clear. The need to make Democracy a real, an honest thing throughout all of the world, (a theme that REWRITE has stressed for months, nay years,) is a prime and inescapable thing. We must win the war without any possible, probable doubt. This time, it must be for keeps. But as quickly as we can, we must put into dynamic effect a Point Four program both at home and abroad. Democracy simply must work. It will if we are determined to make it work. Enough of defensively waiting for the Russians to be reasonable & cooperative. Their leaders have no intention of being either of those things.

But neither do they want war, if they can avoid it. War is dangerous, unpredictable & likely to boomerang on those who start it. A dictator knows better than those outside his iron curtain, how many enemies he has waiting to knife him in the back. We must work, really so, untiringly and unceasingly every minute of our national lives, all of us who are members of UNITED NATIONS, to make this world of peace, of law and order we believe in, strong and good. Not just a hollow shell of fantasy and unreality. The hoarders, the "Me first" folk in our midst, show us how far from realization are our dreams. We must set our own house in order, make UNITED NATIONS a strong, tangible, fair instrument of peace. Above all, we must present and set our story to the Russian people. We must attack for Peace! Fear & Inertia are our only enemies!

FUNDAMENTALS OF GOOD POETRY

By Elva Ray Morris

WHO ARE YOU WRITING FOR?

It is common knowledge that the proportion of the reading public interested in poetry, is very small. But just how small, is vitally important to writers of verse.

According to The BOOKSMITH (London) average sale of a book of poetry in England is 200 to 300 copies. Judging from these figures the proportion of readers who choose poetry there is far greater than in this country. A larger population in the United States, however, gives a poet here a slightly better opportunity for a larger sale. The PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY in March stated that the author of a book of modern poetry was lucky if it sold a total of 1,000 to 1,500 copies. From that article I gather the impression that many poetry books do not sell nearly that well.

The PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY added that most of the publishers consider that the volumes of verse they bring out are largely paid for by the rest of their list. Moreover, they complain that the bookstores order in small amounts and are not interested in reordering when their stock has run out. Nevertheless, the publishers believe that the real trouble lies in the fact that the public for poetry is limited. More limited today than it used to be. One publisher is trying to meet this problem by including in his list poetry that is traditional in style as well as the modern and experimental type. This would appear to indicate that the experimental type isn't going over so well from the point of view of earning its cost.

The PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY did not give any figures on the sale of the—shall we call it the "secret code"—variety of verse, and I was not able to collect any myself. But it is, of course, difficult to imagine that the readership for that kind of poetry is very large. The civilization we live in is geared to such a pace that few people have time or energy, after doing their job, to sit down and puzzle out weird combinations of words or even parts of words and symbols, in order to arrive ultimately at a poetic thought.

According to PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY, the very best seller among living poets is Robert Frost. His books have sold 250,000 copies in the original Holt editions. Other poets, who had done well were listed. These were in larger measure either English poets or the Pulitzer prize winners. Being curious to see whether their works had any outstanding features in common, I looked some of them up in Leominster & Lunenburg Public Library files. I noticed only two facts: (1) they were written in conventional language; that is, words were used in a way that the average intelligent person could understand if he made an ordinary effort. And (2) the library record

in each case of the trips the books had made out into the world was extremely short.

Perhaps in this day when necessities take so much out of the pay envelop, the price of a book might have something to do with such a factor as its sale. It would be interesting to dig up comparative figures on anthologies. Theoretically, if it's a matter usually of counting the cost, collections ought to sell better, since more poems are available in them for the money. Now we know all about one type of anthology—the kind which one buys his way into. It is financed practically exclusively by the monetary contributions of its authors, regardless of whatever claims the publishers (printers) offer in the come-on bait they send out to sucker lists. We also know that poems containing a well selected group of poems by well known, popular poets, sell widely. Louis Untermeyer's "Modern American Poetry" and "Modern English Poetry" have sold in their several editions more than 300,000 copies. Scribner's "Little Treasury of Modern Poetry", edited for the publishers, by Czeslaw Williams, sold 25,000 copies in the past two years since it was published. All of these figures prove, I think, that there is a public for poetry.

I am afraid, therefore, we cannot lay the blame for the lack of interest in poetry at the door of the price lists. While I was at the Leominster Public Library, the helpful, and very sympathetic librarian went through her files to find out how many people might be reading poetry for free at the time. Now Leominster, predominantly a manufacturing and hence small factory city, has a population of 24,000 people. Of all of these, only a dozen were reading books of verse from the public library. July being a vacation month, it is probable that the figure is as low as it ever would be.

The books that are read in a public library do not add a great deal to a writer's royalty. (But do not forget that they are often a back-bone of any publisher's sales, and they can create a demand for an author's product by enabling the general public to sample it.) But multiply the dozen people in Leominster by the number of similar small cities all over this country and you will get an idea of a part of your readership. Don't be misled in doing so, however, for each of the twelve people were reading a different book & only three of these had been published within the last three years.

One can't help thinking that if books (poetry and verse) published by reputable, and well known firms, and given the benefits of publicity through established channels by experienced bookmen, have to fight so hard for existence, the chance of a vanity book making enough to repay its author's investment is infinitesimal. It must depend practically entirely on the author's friends for support. If a poet contemplating either private or vanity publishing, would look as careful-

REWRITE

ly into the investment he is making as when he buys a share of stock, or an automobile, many heartbreaks would be avoided. It is no sin to publish one's own writings. Perhaps you can create a demand for them. Ten years ago Bill started REWRITE on the proverbial, and much abused "squeezing". The thing that both he and I object to in vanity publishing is that the writer does not get what he supposedly pays for: effective publication by a reputable publisher. Most of the vanity publishers are merely printers with no ability or desire to publicize and distribute books, that they print. And their reputations, for lending their names to any author willing to pay their very stiff prices, are so notorious, that your book starts off with that additional and over-powering handicap.

If you wish to be read by a great many people, it is fairly obvious that you must write what will appeal to large numbers of readers in a way they can understand it. The themes of gloom and death (and "cross-letter" puzzles) are no more popular among the masses, for example, than they are at your breakfast table. Newspaper verse is probably the most widely read, and next to that the type that is published in popular magazines. Privately endowed verse magazines offer no real indication as to the size or preference of an audience. They do not depend on subscription lists or advertisers (who do depend on subscription lists) for their continuance.

Knowing your type of audience as well as a Fuller brush man knows his customers, is one of the best ways to help you sell your wares. He does not push his nursing bottle brushes when he steps into the kitchen of a family, where he can tell at a glance that the children are all grown. When you are judging one of your poems or a book of poems before offering it to a magazine or publisher see that it does not fall between two markets. Make it appeal to one type of audience or another. (A common example of failure in this respect is the poem written around a child's interest or theme and for a child, but in the language of grown-ups.)

It is true that the audience for poetry is limited and so the outlook for making money by writing poetry or verse does not appear, on the surface, very good. In terms of other forms of writing it is not. You will not get rich. You may find that in terms of the financial return we all aspire to, your poems may either sell very well or very badly. But that is no reason for not writing. Your thoughts and emotions may prove an inspiration to countless readers. Stephen Foster, a poet who died in poverty, is a classic example. We could cite many another poet who never set the world on fire, yet who justified his existence. If your poems are printed and reprinted across the land, and help to give others courage and idealism and the necessary will to live better lives in a troubled world, you have not lived or written in vain. Moreover, if you dig persistently, you will

discover that there is a very large and wide number of markets that pay quite well for a short, ably written poem. These with the innumerable opportunities to snatch an occasional prize, will enable you to earn a respectable small income from your poetry. But even if it never becomes more than a fairly profitable sideline or hobby, writing verse can be fun as well as a way of life. Make up your mind, therefore, who you wish to be your public, and go to it. Happy landings!

NOTE: a complete set of the REWRITES that carried the poetry workshop columns dealing with a poem Julia Hall Winner wrote last year at the UNH Conference and later revised, is to be available at Durham this year. Poets will thus be able to study the revisions as well as Elva's comments, while they discuss similar workshop analyses.

POETS' WORKSHOP. Don't forget that we are planning discussion of actual poetry mes. in future issues (See JUNE issue for details). Send in a poem, if you wish, and watch September and future issues.

BOOKS FOR POETS

19 MILLION ELEPHANTS. Helen Bevington. Houghton Mifflin Co. \$2.50. A book in five parts. Part One will be enjoyed by persons who enjoy literary allusions. Some of these poems are little more than literary gossip. They lack punch. Part Two, about flying, is better verse. Some of these poems portray emotion. As a whole the book presents competent verse. The vital impact, however, is missing frequently, sometimes through wordiness, often through omission.

THOROUGH MARY SOILS. John Fandel. Bard Review, 509. A regular issue of the magazine, listed as publisher. Contents 25 lyrics, by a 24-year old author. This is the beginning of a good project. The poems are quite competent, but we wish they weren't so slight.

EVENTS. Chrysler Division, 431 Howard St., Detroit 31, Mich., announced in its July issue that it will pay \$50 on publication for 200-word sketches of "little publicized, interesting places & events", tourist attractions it can use in its column, OFF THE BEATEN PATH. The first 4 used were: The Cyclorama, Atlanta, Ga., Elfreth's Alley, Philadelphia, Pa., Blue Hole, Castalia, Ohio, Grand Coulee, Wash.

NEW-STORY. 29 Place Dauphine, Paris 1.... France, is announced by David Burnett, a son of Whit Burnett & Martha Foley. An attempt to make history repeat itself, apparently. A market for literary short stories.

MODERN HOME NEWS. "Pyrofax" Gas Division, 30 East 42nd St., NYC 17, offers \$1 for "My Favorite Recipe".

The Same; offers \$1 in its "Homeowner's Swap Club" for favorite household hints.

NEWS

NEWS AT WCS HOUSE & MARKET TIPS

Elva and Bill enjoyed a wonderful Harvard 1920 Class Reunion for 3 days late in June, at the Harvard Business School. Over 850 of the Class, their wives and children over 16 spent most of their waking hours just being very glad to see each other again. Men came from Texas, California & overseas. No distinctions or cliques. A lot of the men gave much of their time working hard to make everything go smooth. It did and Harvard won a lopsided ball game that was well played. Elva cheered at the right times, being a good player herself.

Afterwards, Uncle Bob Shaw, my old senior year roommate and Billy's godfather spent a week-end recovering and meeting his charge, for the first time, in Lunenburg. Bob tried to delay the July issue of NEWS, but did not succeed, because it was being printed. In Cambridge a quorum of our senior group—the Holworthy "Hundings", of whom at least 4 have left us, reamed very happily. It was a happy occasion and one truly to be remembered. A picture, not a dream of what democracy can be. For rich and poor, men of different races and creeds, met on equal terms.

UNH Conference. First, as this is written we understand that Mrs. Dorothy Toole, Conference secretary and Carroll's right hand, for 12 long years, is seriously ill. Many of us desire to wish her well and assure her we intend to support Carroll during a strenuous session.

Second, Bill & Elva hope to teach, carry on our usual WHITERS' BOOK CLUB display and this year show writers the CENTRAL MS. MARKET FILE. A good part of the time, however, I expect that Elva will be keeping the office, home and garden here, canning, reading me, and supervising our little monkey and junior partner.

The Protestant World, 361 4th Ave., NYC 16, has bought THE PROTESTANT VOICE, which suspends sometime this Fall, when the new paper starts. Reported by A.F. Pfister, circulation editor, for THE VOICE.

Westminster Press, Paul Hoffman, Witherspoon Bldg., Philadelphia 7, Pa. This new editor is himself an author, who has sold ATLANTIC MONTHLY, women's magazines, and TRUE STORY.

Ben I. Hume and Burgess Whiteside are now respectively the trade managers of Macmillan Co. in Chicago & Boston. Good men to see if you have a book to peddle to that firm.

CHRISTIAN LIFE, Robert Walker, 434 So. Wabash Ave., Chicago 5, Ill., will have a Blue Ribbon story in "one issue, beginning in October, and repeating every other month. It will carry a brief sketch of the author and will pay a bonus of \$25, above the 1¢ word rate. Evangelical Christian problems. Short

shorts: 900--1,200; shorts, 2,000--3,000. No limit on the words one writer can win.

Mary Iothrop, a new subscriber, has coined a phrase that may prove helpful to writers. "I am limited to Observation, Inspiration and Imagination for my writing themes. Sort of 'SEE-pling' my way along." That is especially true of many of the shut-ins Elva and I know. But where there are the three aids that Mrs. Iothrop speaks of, there need be no lack of opportunity. "Four walls don't make a prison make." Handicapped writers are often more industrious, productive in writing than their more able bodied competitors.

In the July issues of CHILD'S COMPANION I notice pieces by Kather Hamall, Arthur Skerpy and Clarence Hoffman, all friends of WCS.

Bill had a piece in July COLLECTOR-HORNY-IST.

Ernest Kehr, Chairman, Stamps for the Wounded, 230 West 41st St., NYC 18, has been appointed as national coordinator of all such activities in the VA hospitals. Stamp collectors and others may contact him for further details. A very worthy cause.

In the Summer PORT'S NEED, Letitia Wilson, Oak Park, Greenwell Springs, La., noticed poems or awards to Lucile Coleman, Edith M. Larabee, Margie Roswell, all in the WCS Family. Also there was mention of Celia M. Wright's ESST, Sulphur Springs, Texas, poetry reading program, and Henry E. Baker's reprint column, OUR MODERN POETS, Times Herald Newport News, Va., both edited by WCS Family members of long standing.

Helen S. Neal, Columbia, Mo., writer, and still another WCS Family member, reports she has hit her own separate market. Her husband, Bob Neal, is a staff member at Durham and writes small books about newspaper writing as a member of the Univ. of Mo., Journalism School.

DO YOU NEED MS. ENVELOPES?

The best quality at the lowest prices. We try to give you the most for the money. The cost of our next re-orders will undoubtedly be higher. Get your orders filled now.

SMALLEST sizes (No. 10 & 11) (Two fold)

25 of EACH \$.90 50 of EACH \$1.65.

SMALL sizes (6 1/2 x 9 & 7 x 10) (One fold)

25 of EACH \$1.00 50 of EACH \$1.95.

LARGE sizes (9 x 12 & 10 x 13) (Flat)

15 of EACH \$1.00 30 of EACH \$1.90.

All prices plus postage. 30¢ is an average. We adjust overpayments of postage by extending your NEWS subscription or refunding.

REWRITE

CAN YOU PROVE YOUR OWNERSHIP?

Be systematic, keep your records and correspondence with editors in a business-like manner. A friend of ours is having a lot of trouble in getting a ms. back from a critic who, she believes, wished to collaborate with her on the ms. Suppose in a case like this, that the critic was unscrupulous or dishonest. Supporting documents, such as a letter from the critic disclaiming ownership, or a record of the writer's own work upon the ms. and a letter covering his sending it out to a critic, are well nigh essential if an author has to prove his rightful ownership.

The question of whether a writer ought to send a covering letter with a ms. is raised frequently by inexperienced writers. It is usually said that you should not write, unless you have a reason. Well, here is a very practical reason. Nine times out of ten you will never need a record of the mailing. But the tenth, when you take a chance, is generally the time when you need proof. Most editors are honest; most of them are careful. But occasionally an office boy is human; he puts a ms. on the wrong desk, or it is buried in a file. Whatever the incident, there is need to be able to tell the editor, that you mailed your story, "Daddy's Darling" to him with a letter on March 13th, 1949. The fact that you can give him the precise date a copy of the letter, puts the weight right squarely on his shoulders. And if there is a need for proving ownership, you have a circumstantial case in the carbon and whatever records of your mss. you keep.

MARKET TIPS AND COMMENT

TRUE, Fun Editor, 67 West 44th St., NYC 18, pays \$25 for about 7 true, humorous anecdotes each month (original, not previously printed and preferably taken from your own experience). Payment on acceptance; if no reply, after 4 weeks you can assume it has been rejected. By-lines are used.

ORAL HYGIENE, Dr. Edward J. Ryan, 708 Church St., Evanston, Ill., pays \$10 for the "Picture of the Month" used as the first feature in the magazine. A biographical by-line is used.

From Winifred E. Dawson, Author Memorial and others we have had good reports on Rev. Raymond M. Voh, editor of Business at Otterbein Press, Dayton 2, Ohio. His field is restricted, and his pay small, but he has the unique custom of writing a personal letter to many of his new correspondents. (Old, too.)

Another editor who is "fair & square," says Winifred E. Dawson, is Rev. Amory Johnson, the YOUNG PEOPLE, Aquasana Book Concern, Rock Island, Ill. Though

he "pays on publication, he pays well," she states.

It is nice to get good reports on editors. Send us in any reports such as these you get. They help us to make editors some alive—as individuals. And that helps every writer to write better for them. When you can visualize an editor as a person, you can write an article or story to suit his requirements.

ORAL HYGIENE (See previous column) offers \$1 for each newsworthy item clipped from the columns of a newspaper. Name of the paper & the dateline must be included in the entry. The names and addresses of all contributors are listed at the end of the feature.

Page 34 THE INDEPENDENT
Long Beach, Calif.—Chicago, June 21, 1950

Tele-Vues by TERRY VERNON

Lack of new formats for television shows was decried recently by Charleton Winkler, program director for KECN. He said his station was offered 1225 video programs during the past 30 days and only 40 of them fell into the individual format category.

This means that there is plenty of room in the TV field for some writers with imagination. TV must have new and different ideas in order to keep programs from reverting to the boring sameness. Being an infant industry and expensive as well, there isn't room for the massive sets or locations as used in movies to give depth and variety.

There must be many young writers in the world who would like to put forth their ideas and perhaps come up with the TV equivalent of such popular programs as "Queen for a Day," "Truth or Consequences," or similar shows.

Winkler pointed out that most of the submitted programs fell into the mystery, interview and daytime short category with the only difference being in the phrasing used.

At the same time, Bernie Proctor, who owns the program "Big Story" is willing to pay \$1000 for TV scripts. So there is money in writing for TV, but it must be original in idea and plan—not just a re-hash of present radio or video shows.

Here is an interesting, and, we think, a sensible comment about television. Consistently we have avoided exploiting this field as a wonderful opportunity for the writer because we know it to be a highly technical and experimental one.

It will be open only to experienced authors for many years. Much of the materials used will be news and other stuff that gets written up by "staff" writers, or is in the public domain. Radio programs that can be easily switched over and movie stuff will also be utilized. Only as the circuits are worked out and the competition between these, will the budget money for "material", i.e., writers be expended. That was the way this same pattern developed in the case of both Radio and Talking Pic-

HERESY AT A CONFERENCE!

ANOTHER POINTER to writers (anonymous from The New Yorker, but with a definite E. B. White tang): "We encountered a writer this week who wanted our advice. He wanted to know whether he should give up his job teaching school and move to town, where he could meet other writers. 'What do you want to meet other writers for?' we asked sharply. And he didn't know. 'If you just want to know how they look,' we continued, they look terrible, particularly in the late evening in groups of three to seven, or in the morning singly. If you want to know what they talk about, they talk about themselves and the things they write.' The writer thanked us and went back to his useful work of teaching school and writing, safe for a few months more, anyway, from the demoralizing effects of mingling with his craft."

Book of the Month Club NEWS.

to think imaginatively in terms of a new form.

REWRITE

DO RESEARCH AS YOU READ

Keep your eyes open as you read the popular magazines for valuable source materials that may help you to develop into a busy and money-making writer. Many feature articles, which are often well loaded with background facts about the subject they discuss, serve as a ready-made source supply for you. You should never depend upon their accuracy exclusively. Always check them against an encyclopedia or other reference books. Combine their data with original study of your own. But properly used, a good feature that adequately covers its special field, can often form a valuable short-cut. It may even save you hours of plodding research. And if you succeed in collecting several important pieces, either in journalistic or book form, you are well on your way to becoming an authority on the subject.

One particular phase of this method of alert watchfulness for material you can use, is to be found in the large ads. in publications that usually circulate widely. Many big industrial organizations or trade public relations bureaus use an interesting educational booklet as a means of promoting goodwill for their product. Recently, as a specific example, I have myself clipped coupon offers from the Natural Rubber Bureau, 1631 K St., N.W., Washington 6, D.C., which distributes several brochures about the making of natural rubber and the new uses to which it is being put; from the International Nickel Co., NYC 5, that is busy popularizing its developments of monel.

There is an almost endless field of writing for the juvenile writer, who is willing and competently able to make this kind of exciting factual material available for children either through their magazines or books. It is a very worthwhile job, too, to open young eyes to the great adventure of life. To an imaginative writer the possibilities open in several directions. (1) Popularization such as I've just suggested; (2) the basic preparation of the industrial booklets themselves; many large industries and even smaller ones have not as yet seen the need for promoting the interesting aspects of their products & usefulness to people. (3) Even those industries that have had the good sense to write effective feature material about their product's background and development, haven't as yet visualized the full possibilities of awakening the interest of children. A few of the more aggressive business corporations—in some cases to their own detriment—propagandize and seek to advertise on the sly by teaching helps they make available to school authorities. But the real job has not effectively been grasped up to now.

A great opportunity awaits some writer if he will work with industry to prepare booklets for children, that are as interesting, as readable and accurately informative as a number of the better ones now designed to be

read exclusively by adults. Such a writer, if he would avoid the pitfalls of propaganda & disguised advertising, would find the field books as well as magazine feature writing open to him. Such a writer would have to sell both industry and editors on the advantages of an enlightened, non-commercial viewpoint. Too often, the job was poorly done when the craze for "career" books was at its height. Stories for entertainment became mere stalling-horses for the dissemination of information on how to break in successfully in this business or that. Today, we have learned it is necessary to tell a good story & present real characters; and only secondarily, work in the background of a particular industry. Real drama, in other words, as against "illustrative" drama slyly chosen by the writer to teach a commercial lesson.

So it should be with the kind of writing, that I am discussing here. The true romance of man's long, slow discovery of the uses to which his world and all it contains, can be put, is endless. It needs no doctoring with industrial propaganda, and in the long run, business benefits by not intruding. A young reader is a creative, idealistic reader. If you tell him with your own genuine enthusiasm the wonder of rubber, nickel or steel, he will be much more likely to be stirred than if you try to insinuate between the lines of your feature article, that "Blabie Peanuts" are better than the "Bumbum" line. Happily, the more enlightened business leaders today have learned this lesson, some of them—the hard way. But it is one for you, the writer who would make use of these industrial pamphlets, to learn from the very beginning. A good reporter is always the one, who tells story without editorializing the facts; who may be shocked by shameful or iniquitous conditions, but who while depicting the situation graphically, nevertheless leaves readers freedom to make up their own minds.

AN EDITOR SUGGESTS AND OFFERS HINTS

CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE. T. Otto Nell, 740 Rush St., Chicago 11, Ill., warns would-be writers for its pages that only about "1 in. in 50" can be accepted under the present limitations of space. "Since lay readers outnumber clergymen in our readership about 50 to 1, we favor human interest stories. We buy little fiction, & only short stories. Files of poetry are usually overloaded, but we're continually on the lookout for seasonal poetry, submitted several months in advance."

The back of Mr. Nell's rejection slip has some good hints for writers:

- (1) Have you stated the purpose of your ms. in a...sentence before beginning to write?
- (2) Have you directed your writing to laymen rather than preachers?
- (3) Have you begun, continued, & ended with the reader, his needs and interests, rather than...the writer and his message?
- (4) Have you used your own first-hand experiences, instead of drawing on compilations?

REWRITE

quotations, if you are doing feature writing? If you are writing fiction, have you set up a story problem and then developed plot and characterizations to show that character, & not chance, solves the problem?

Good advice, no matter what magazine editor you are writing for!

Something to Think About. The Christophers list these as the fields that touch the lives of all people:

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| (1) Education | (4) Trade Unions |
| (2) Government | (5) Social Service |
| (3) The writing end of newspapers, magazines, books, radio, motion pictures, television | (6) Library Work |

It is Fr. Keller's theory that 1% of this generation working in these fields to: "restore the fundamental truth", this 1% really can change the world. It could be.

CARE, 20 Broad St., NYC 5, announces that "in response to numerous requests from foreign colleges and high schools, 'Journalism' has been added to the categories of books which can be sent overseas through the CARE-UNESCO Book Fund, which provides new [American] scientific and technical books for educational institutions in 20 European & Asian countries...A desire to help establish a free & constructive press was voiced by many institutions which listed journalism in the list of their book needs."

IMPORTANT! Contributions of any amount can be sent to the Book Fund, as above, or to a local CARE office. Sums under \$10 are pooled in the general fund, donors of \$10 & over may specify the country, institution and category.

REWRITE will be glad to forward any sums, and to specify that they are to be used for this worthy purpose, which is of vital importance to writers everywhere. Your future as a writer depends considerably upon maintenance of a free world and a free press. You can make a substantial contribution to this cause of Peace and Democracy by thus aiding the education of journalists trained in our heritage of a Free Press.

So far as we know, REWRITE once again, is the only writers' magazine that by positive editorial comment and action interprets the writer's place and responsibilities in this world of confused chaos in which we live today. Whether he wishes or not, the writer in this era must strive to understand the turbulent cross currents of political and economic struggle, and use them to affect survival. Otherwise, he will be swept away and destroyed. At the very least, he will prove unable to meet the challenge of his readers, who desire ardently the security of knowing where they stand. The Communists have shown us that there is no half-way ground. Either we are for Democracy and the brave world of

Freedom and sanctity of the Individual or we are not. There can be no half-way appeasing or intellectually immoral shilly-shallying. In the words of an American Revolutionary patriot, the nations of the free world must all hang together, or they will be hung & quartered separately by the exponents of slavery of the individual, and the mind, as against the body of man at its most selfish, predatory excess.

REWRITE believes sufficiently in the sanctity of the individual writer, large or small, to wish to do the best darn reporting job it can. Editorially & with all the slender resources at our disposal, we are on the side of human rights and writers' right. So let's go! Let's stand up and be counted for what we as writers must believe in, if we are really worth our salt.

NATURE, Richard W. Westwood, Am. Nature Association, 1214 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C., which is frequently overstocked, says that it is especially overstocked on verse, and this "barrier must remain up until we've made some appreciable inroads into the present accumulation in hand."

READERS' DIGEST, Pleasantville, N.Y., told a member of the WCS Family recently that its "schedule for the coming months is so crowded that development of a new feature is unlikely at best."

Sherwood Music, a Hollywood song publishing firm sends out a circular, not individually addressed, using a promise of a royalty in advance of \$150, but requiring an advance payment of 50¢ per song ms. for "secrretarial handling". The WCS Minute Man, who reported this to us, had never written songs at any time! We continually advise writers to sidestep very decidedly all "opportunities" requiring an investment, no matter how small.

Vanity Publishers. The advertising of several of these firms is regularly accepted by certain magazines supposedly dedicated to the best interests of writers. We know of no vanity publisher whose reputation is likely to enhance that of the writers he may print at a considerable cost to the author. The idea of paying the author a 40% royalty, usually after so many copies have been sold or paid for by the author, is a hollow & meaningless gesture—like taking money from the author's right-hand pocket and putting it back in his left.

If any author says he's been "suppressed" after writing an "expose" of the publishing business or any other phase of American life, forget it. The publishing biz is not that well organized. As a book news reporter for more than 25 years, I have seen, from the inside, one or two attempted suppressions. In every case where the author, the book and publisher was above reproach, the attempt has failed. No writer is freer than we Americans. Beware the author who cries "wolf"—to sell!

REWRITE

THIS, TOO, IS PUBLISHING BUSINESS

The ramifications of the publishing business are sometimes enormous and amazing. One has only to study a Macmillan Co. catalogue, or survey the activities of Doubleday & Co. Owners of several book clubs, innumerable reprint lines, (a separate mail-order firm was developed by its late chairman of the board) and the organizer of a large chain of bookshops, its interests cover practically each and every phase of the industry. Its printing press at Garden City and another plant, in Pennsylvania are among the largest in the country.

But printing and selling books is often a single phase of a complex business. Recently, we were given a sales talk about selling REWRITE to subscription agents and public libraries, which would then take fire & serve as zealous missionaries in carrying a vital message to individual writers and readers. A few figures from this one wholesale agency, The Franklin Square Agency, which is "owned & operated by Harper & Brothers" publishers of HARPER'S as well as books, will give you an idea of what goes on in order to get you a check from any one of several thousand big or small magazines.

Doing a \$3,000,000 business in annual subscriptions, this firm has 12,000 local representatives, issues a "periodical handbook", that goes to 8,000 librarians and managers, the latter in subscription departments of a nation-wide assortment of bookstores, book departments in department stores, etc. Altogether, it distributes about 2,500,000 circulars and catalogues. It is only one of the dozen or so wholesale agencies that service local subscription agents. And while a good many magazines depend primarily upon advertising to finance themselves, through these veins flow the lifeblood that enables magazines to create a market for your mass.

In addition to this activity, Harper's also runs another by-product business. Several years ago, its "lettershop" service that deals in "names", offered us on a fee basis selected lists of attractive names. So, remember that every time you sign up for HARPER'S on a trial subscription bargain, or enter a novel in the Harper's Prize Novel Contest your name and address are being sifted and added to a special list. The total number of names offered us at the time was more than 60,000. We hope that some censorship is exercised and these names are not offered to vanity publishers, song publishers and other sharp merchandisers. For ourselves we refused this interesting speculation opportunity, because we never buy, sell, exchange, loan or trade names. The names of our readers and clients are confidential. They are never revealed, except when we occasionally put two or more writers together in order to help them work together for mutual benefit. We are strong believers in that kind of co-operation.

HOW'S YOUR RATING AVERAGE?

Here are the sales reported to us in this past month:

Frances Durland
Articles: LETTER, DAILY MEDITATIONS.

Marjorie S. Scheuer
Poem: MIDLAND Poetry Review.

Jean Tiger Cohen
Satire: VOGUE.

Bernhard A. Roth
Article: AIR FACTS.

Winifred E. Dawson
Story: BUILDERS.

Virginia Sievert
Article: OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART.

Luthera Davis Freyer
Article: PROFITABLE HOBBIES (July).

Lucile Coleman
Poems: IMPROVEMENT ERA, LADIES' HOME JOURNAL, HIGH CANY, Columbia Publications & others. N.Y. TIMES, MY LIFE.

Carrie Esther Hamill
Articles: THIS DAY, BUILDERS, CHILD COMPANION.
Poems: BUILDERS.

R. R. Ricketts
Story: TEENS.

Mary Billings
Poems: C. S. MONITOR, Denver POST.

Note: send in your report. It often helps us to suggest further markets to you. It also keeps us in touch with markets. We greatly appreciate the many reports on markets & news we can add to the CENTRAL MS. MARKET FEE. All of these make it possible for us to check markets and bring you accurate, up-to-the-minute news. They substantiate our own queries.

ASK US BEFORE YOU BITE. NO CHANGE

We have been receiving a number of queries as to a certain NYC "critic-agent". Stressing free reading and a "staff report" i.e., a "bulletin" of market tips (if edited in such a way as to convey the impression that he's the confidant of every magazine & book editor, he invariably sends back word that your mass. are "saleable", but need editing by "my staff" for a fee of —. Some gullible writers have paid two or three fees, but haven't thereafter received a check. Some have experienced difficulty in even getting their mass. returned to them. It is unfortunate that at least one NYC paper and one or two writer's magazines accept this man's advs., despite a very bad report from the Nat. Writers' Club & the BBB. We've exposed him frequently; in 1946, when he used another name!

REWRITE

NEWS AND VIEWS ALONG THE WAY

DAVIS CONTEST, James Neill North, 1016 N. Central, Oklahoma City, Okla., offers \$5, \$3, \$2 and honorable mentions for "best poems by any poet in U.S. or Canada, contributing to everyday living. Any form. Send triplicate copies, using pen-name with real name in sealed envelop. Closes: Dec. 31, 1950.

One of last year's winners and one honorable mention were **WCS Family members**. This year's judges include two 1948 winners.

SAT. REVIEW OF LIT., Amy Loveman, 25 West 40th St., NYC 19, reported late in June: "We have made no plans to replace William H. Bennett. He seems irreplaceable. For the present we are going to publish poetry as it comes, and as it seems fit. But we are not going to run any department like 'The Phoenix Nest'. Perhaps a month from now we may feel differently." We advise poets to watch the magazine for developments.

COUNTRY GENTLEMAN, Chaff, Independence Sq., Philadelphia, Pa., uses light verse, prose, & cartoons. The issue I examined carried in the same order 2, 3 & 3 contributions. Good filler market. By-lines used on all items.

FARM JOURNAL, Passed By the Non-Sensor... Washington Sq., Philadelphia, Pa., is another farm magazine that uses humorous fillers. The copy I studied had 2 jokes, 3 cartoons, and 5 news breaks (scrambled sentences, and typographical errors).

Dep't. of Agriculture Yearbook, Sup't. of Documents, Gov't Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. \$2.00. Charlotte Norlin says these are "mighty fine sources of information. Often a Congressman or Senator will send you a free copy."

Statistics. A questionnaire sent out by **American Booksellers' Association** dredged up the data from 122 booksellers that new book sales are: 63% adult trade books; 24% children's books; 13% text and technical books; 13% miscellaneous. (Figures quoted by N. Y. **HERALD TRIBUNE**. They add up to 113%!) Very interesting. The first 3 items are correct.

In 2 years the ABA's "Give-a Book Certificate Plan" sold only \$75,342 worth of books as believe: idea good, needs much better merchandising, to make it attractive to retail buyers and booksellers. When you give gifts give books and magazines. In that way you'll be helping writers by building markets.

READERS' DIGEST note. One of our **WCS Family** recently made a bid to do a **RD** condensation of a published slick article, on which he had some special knowledge. A very kindly letter from the editors informed him: (1) the particular piece had already been voted down by the **RD** staff; (2) all condensations are done by the staff, which is experienced in the highly specialized techniques of **RD**.

How to Make Money (8)

TRADING PUBLICITY IS A YANKEE CUSTOM

Mrs. Marguerite Kellner recently developed an ingenious method for commercializing, if not actually making money from, her writing. One of her hobbies is Antiques. At the big exhibit at Mechanics Building in Boston this spring, she very much wanted to have a booth. But feeling that her small turn-over did not justify the expense, she made a suggestion to the management. In exchange for a booth she offered to write local features (news features) for the various local newspapers. The management agreed and gave her a list of exhibitors. She wrote the story and sent a tearsheet to the management. She got her booth and a chance to sell her wares. In addition, she met all of the exhibitors she covered, a nice education in her hobby.

This technique is one used by every high-powered public relations expert for circus, fair and traveling show organizations, not to mention many other civic and social and industrial concerns. Private schools are particularly interested in getting the news to the paper back home that little Susan Gladstone is studying this year at Harvey Academy and is president of Alpha Beta Omicron. It doesn't hurt a young writer to do pedestrian news writing of this kind. It teaches him to handle facts, and makes editors more eager to buy a feature story later.

EDITORS & AGENTS PLEASE NOTE

Here's an interesting suggestion: an idea for a book that would have a large & profitable sale over the years. A new subscriber to **REWRITE** writes:

"I would enjoy reading a book by a first reader for almost any of the larger slicks. It would be enlightening to an inexperienced writer."

It would be a very helpful book. I hope a smart editor will pick up the idea.

VOGUE, Jessica Daves, 420 Lexington Ave., NYC 17, "apparently is in need of satires. I just sold them one in 6 days, and they seem to use them each time right away," reported Jean Tiger Cohen recently. "It's wise to be familiar with the magazine," she adds. "But they even shorten 1,000 word pieces on occasion."

AMERICAN LION, 380 5th Ave., NYC 19, is a new address.

FARM JOURNAL, Washington Sq., Philadelphia, Pa., "pays \$5 for each 'slick trick' & uses several each month," reports **Charlotte Norlin**, who also says:

SUCCESSFUL FARMING, 1716 Locust St., Des Moines, Iowa, "pays \$5 for a favorite recipe, & \$3 for a hint for 'All Around the Farm'."

REWRITE

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE SCENE

The basis of all successful fiction is the dramatic scene. A scene occurs when two, or more, characters come together and something happens to or between them. Preferably something dramatic. Conflict. If they just talk about what wonderful air they're having, or the beautiful gown Lucy Pindrop wore at the Club dance last night, you will begin to yawn. If on the other hand Lucy Pindrop comes hurrying into the livingroom of her best friend's home, her eyes flashing indignantly and the flush of anger on her pretty cheeks, you sit up. When she exclaims without waiting for the amenities, "Did you see who Jed took to the dance last night? And the way—she acted?"... A scene has started and you lean forward to enjoy it.

The radio uses the technique of the scene repeatedly. With a few deft strokes, the MC sets the stage. He even tips you off as regards the key character traits: "All is not well in the cozy little Perry home. In fact, a storm is brewing. Johnnie has brought home a report card that, well, ah, Mother speaking privately to Father, has suggested that he do something about it. The Great Man who had been preparing to snatch a few minutes' shut-eye before the real duties of the evening—the Braves vs. Phils (Television)—begin, is reading the evening EDGEM in his private den off the diningroom, when Johnnie knocks. Then enters. "Hey, Pop. Can I go to the movie?"

Father — "Well, eh, didn't your Mother have something rather, eh, important for you to do?"

Johnnie — "Oh, sure."

Short as this little introduction is, it indicates the main outlines of a scene. Situation is the first requirement. You tickle the reader's interest with a promise of the "catastrophe" that is certain to develop... In this case, it is double-edged, certainly susceptible of humorous treatment, since obviously neither Father nor Johnnie desire to bring up the matter of the "odorous" report card. Yet lurking in the background is Mother demanding action. A reader does not need to be very alert to foresee the possibility of several scenes, one following inevitably after another.

Once your situation is set, you select an MC (Main Character) and an OP (Opposing Character). Then you define the purpose of this scene, and devise the best method of carrying it forward. The purpose of the scene above is to put Father on the spot and watch him wriggle. And by his equivocation & disinclination to accept responsibility he sets himself into deeper hot water. Evading the issue with Johnnie, he finds himself facing Mother, as the opposing and much more belligerent antagonist. Next to situation this is the most important factor: to set up clear-

ly the two opposing forces, each moving in an opposite direction.

Then your job becomes simply one of bringing the two characters into contact and developing the resulting conflict. There are two factors to keep in mind with regard after that to what happens: (1) the step-step growth of the action; (2) the outcome. You do not want to have the issue decided easily or too abruptly. On the contrary, the idea is to delay, to retard the final decision until there has been a real test of the strength of both forces. Also, remember the outcome will show up in some variation of at most three ways. The MC will triumph, be defeated, or the issue will be inconclusive.

It is important, then, after having evolved your situation and set up the "conflict" characters and the problem, to indicate very clearly what the two possible extremes of the outcome are likely to be. The hero wants to be champion of the world, but he lacks on the floor for the count of ten. You promise the reader that the ending of the scene will be this or that. Then you develop as much suspense as to which it will be, to make it as exciting a scene as you can.

Every story, every scene, therefore, is a tug-of-war. And just as a tug-of-war is interesting to the degree that both sides are almost certain to win, and the outcome never appears certain until the final tug, the success of a scene depends upon the breath-taking suspense you inject into it. A reader's heart should palpitate until it nearly bursts. He should die—a thousand deaths. He should be scared to death that the hero will lose and that the villain will win. You can employ every trick at your disposal to tense & induce an attack of heart failure, so long as the "turns" you inject into the story or scene are legitimate. By that I mean plausible or likely under the conditions you lay down at the start. The reader is the umpire and if he tells you you have overplayed the situation, there is no argument.

Of course there is also the element of an unexpected surprise. You pitch the hero into the arena against seemingly hopeless odds. But you give him a secret ace-in-the-hole so that by a miraculous and brilliant twist he is able to triumph. Or by skillful narrative skill you convince the reader that there is another possible outcome than the prosaic & conventional win, lose or draw. But in either of these eventualities you, the author, always must know what you are doing. You cannot hope to plot "by guess and by God". It has been said that a clever writer can work any miracle he desires, if he knows how to plant effectively.

Planting is simply the art of dropping in an unobtrusive reference to the MC's saving ace-in-the-hole before it's needed, so that the reader accepts it when it is used. It's a most difficult art and takes practice.

REWRITE

THE MONTH'S NEW BOOKS

THE WRITER'S HANDBOOK. Ed. A.S. Bureak. The writer. \$4.00. It is always good to see new editions of this market handbook appear. In the front of the book there have been no alterations in the list of excellent articles about writing. But the list of markets is a noticeably revised one. It is clearly apparent in the index. Some writers may like other manuals for format or usability, but the editing of this one is generally superior. A WRITERS' BOOK CLUB Selection.

THE STORY OF ERNIE FYLE. Lee C. Miller. The Viking Press. \$3.95. This biography by Ernie's long-time editor and personal friend is a readable and objective newspaper biography of America's most beloved columnist. But it does not catch the homey, intimate, "human" overtones that made Ernie come alive to the great mass of his constant readers. In real life Miller shows that this unusual journalist kept his distance from his "bosom" and they in turn never fully appreciated or understood him. He became an American "institution" in spite of them and the failure of a great syndicate to really sell its priceless A No. 1 product.

Perhaps one of the most important contributions this book makes is the proof it offers of a vital weakness in American newspaper & magazine writing. Too much of it is sophisticated "boiler plate" ground out on an assembly-line. Or "New Yorkese", fresh colloquialisms and impersonal, technically competent stuff, written by men and women rewrite experts living in a vacuum or deadened by a too loud and universal wire service. They've forgotten how to be natural. So it is that the Ernie Pyles and Will Rogers are tolerated and later venerated, but seldom appreciated by the big brass of the working press. Simply because in addition to being imaginative craftsmen, they do the job that all of the press and publishers should be doing all of the time: writing for the folks back home all over America. Think about this, writers, the next time you sit down to file a piece. And read this book to understand better the problem.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN EMPIRE. Elvon I. Howe, editor. Foreword by Palmer Hoyt. Doubleday and Co. \$3.00. Here is an attempt to do the very thing we editorialized about in the previous paragraph. This is a collection of pieces originally prepared and written for the ROCKY MOUNTAIN EMPIRE, magazine section of the Denver Post, of which Palmer Hoyt became publisher in February, 1946. Mostly staff-written, or by assignment, but some free lance, these feature articles represent a new type, a new form of dramatic feature writing that writers should be familiar with. An interesting and healthy experiment in American regional writing. A WRITERS' BOOK CLUB Selection.

DOES IT ALWAYS RAIN HERE, MR. HOYT? Murray Hoyt. Hinehart & Co. \$3.00. The true exper-

iences of a member of the WCS Family in his successful attempts to build and conduct on Lake Champlain a summer resort. He is rather well known also as a successful writer for the slick magazines. Hilarious as this book is, it is sometimes not so funny because Murray identifies the reader so closely with his own personal adventure, that it ceases to be ~~some~~ universally typical. A good first book that we are glad to recommend highly.

BOOKS OF PERMANENT WORTH

I SELL WHAT I WRITE. Jules Archer. \$2.50. A very practical and helpful book by a writer who has actually sold a wide variety of markets. He explains specifically his problems and how he did it. Real inside stuff. Good. A WRITERS' BOOK CLUB Selection.

WRITING TO SELL. Scott Meredith. \$2.75. One of the prominent critic-agents discusses ins and outs of selling popular stuff. Provocative and helpful, if you can read it objectively. Every writer should read it once.

WRITERS ON WRITING. Ed. Herschel Brickell. \$3.00. The UNH Conference Handbook. I have two chapters in it. The one on agents helps you to evaluate such books as Mr. Meredith's.

THE WRITER'S BOOK. Ed. Helen Hull. \$4.00. A About 40 members of the Authors' League are represented here in meaty pieces they like service to their organization. Practically, I believe, every major form of writing gets a going over. Very valuable inside stuff.

WRITING FOR CHILDREN. Erick Berry & Herbert Best. \$2.50. A lively and thought-provoking book by two successful writers in the field.

THE WRITING OF FICTION. Arthur S. Hoffman. \$3.50. One of the best books on fiction by a teacher and former editor of ADVENTURE.

Buy all your books through the WRITERS' BOOK CLUB. It earns you valuable Book Dividends, and saves you money. At the same time it is a method of strengthening your REWRITE, and CENTRAL MS. MARKET FILE.

The WCS Circulating library (\$2 per year, plus postage both ways) enables you to read most of the best books on writing at a small cost. Many writers use this as test in buying the books suited to their needs. Thus, the library saves them money.

We are always glad to advise writers on a book buying or reading problem. Since we accept no advertising and do not advertise our own WCS, our advice on books, critics and agents, not to mention mail-order courses or other services seeking your patronage is as objective, impartial and unbiased as you'll find anywhere. Editors and agents (the reputable ones) give us a high rating on this.

We never charge for this kind of advice.. Your best interests are our only aim.

NEWSWIRE

HAVE YOU TRIED THE "NEWS BIOGRAPHY"?

Here is a suggestion for the free lance, who are trying to break in. Try writing the "biography" type of piece for your daily or Sunday newspaper. These are merely the news feature you read every day. As for a subject, link or peg it to a recent or impending news story. (As recently as the last week in May I saw a long example of this kind of story, in a Boston paper. It gave a full length picture of the new medical examiner for Suffolk County, a Catholic, whose testimony is generally credited by newspapermen with having won acquittal for Dr. Sander in the famous, and still controversial "mercy killing" case. His father was my faculty adviser during my undergraduate days at Harvard, and I grew up with his older sister's crowd. Bill.)

One story I noticed was pegged to the dedication of a library addition. The biography was that of the first chief librarian—(for the college). Another was about the awarding of an honorary doctorate of divinity to a man who had violated the campus tradition of his day by marrying while he was still in school. Sounds silly today, but I can remember when I was in college 12 or 13 years ago, campus marriages were rare indeed.

A third biography was about the girl, who ran the tool-shed in the engineering division of my college. This one differed in that it had no news-peg. The story could have been written this week, next month or next year, any time just as well. I know an Irish banker who has been a grain dealer for 30 years. He had no formal education and he recounted an anecdote that would liven up the biography. He is also, a native of western Kansas, and is some 70 years old. That is still another unusual fact in this country. Not too many folk that age were born in Kansas.

Who writes biographies? Some are part of the class work of journalism students. Others are the work of free lances and correspondents; in the larger cities, of the magazine section feature writers and city room, or district reporters. Life histories, newspaper style, are not hard to write. On the contrary, they are excellent practice for a beginning writer. They teach him to get over his facts easily and fluently. As in the case of all newspaper writing, once you have learned the rules the writing is not difficult and can be done usually quickly and in a hurry.

Subjects are everywhere. Outstanding farmers are often written up in rural areas. A teacher who has taught more than 25 years.. new college or university heads, leaders of other businesses & institutions, exceptional students, statesmen when they come to your town, etc., etc. The list is endless.

As for learning how, the daily newspapers are the best teacher a person could have. The very frequency makes your opportunity easy.

You read your paper every day and learn its needs and style almost unconsciously. So try your hand. The pay isn't great, except that the best papers pay mighty well, when writers hit what they want. There is a big market for life stories. Hitting & getting the check shouldn't be too hard. Charlotte Norlin

ANALYSIS OF THE MAN'S MARKET

In our Central M. Market File we are beginning to get a pretty good picture of the men's magazine market. A number of new publications have appeared in this field in recent months. This used to be a very restricted division, with ESQUIRE practically alone in the slick section. Now there are a group of magazines competing against each other.

Of course many of the pulps are predominantly masculine in their appeal, although a segment of women read the Westerns and Detective books. But there are a lot of sideline departments; all of the hunting & fishing, & the popular mechanics books. A magazine such as COURMET, Earle H. MacAusland, Plaza Hotel, 29th & 5th Ave., NYC, a sophisticated book, falls within the male field.

But several old line books continue, year after year, half-way between pulp & slick, a challenge to the better type of action story-teller. These are:

ADVENTURE, Kendall W. Goodwyn, 205 E. 42nd St., NYC 17, good characterization, tight plotting & a good story against any background. Particularly interested now in adventures laid against a modern canvas. Pays 2¢ & up, Ace. Also uses short features (2,000) and a small amount of masculine (balled) verse.

ARGOSY, Rogers Terrill, same address, tries to cover an even wider field, all interests for men. Adult, honest stuff, no melodrama. Again, features are short and fiction for a new writer 3,000 to 4,000. Howard J. Lewis, non-fiction editor. Also uses cartoons, and pays 45¢ for "Gripes" & "Tall Tales".

BLUE BOOK, Donald Kennicott, 444 Madison Ave., NYC 17, is another old timer that wants adventure and pays well on Ace. no poetry.

BLACK MASK, Kenneth White, 205 E. 42nd St., NYC, published when I was a kid. A detective book slanted to modern crime & detection, but emphasizing good characterization. 2¢ up.

ESQUIRE, 366 Madison Ave., NYC 17, is shaking up. Better study the book. Sophisticated and at times risqué. Lots of cartoons.

JUNGLE STORIES, Jerome Biaby, 130 W. 42nd St., NYC 18, pulp, action shorts from 2,500 in the Congo. Prefers white heroes, but accepts the tribal-life story. No articles. 1¢.

MALE and STAG, Noah Serfat, 300 5th Ave., NYC 1, are 2 books in the Goodman chain. Articles chiefly here, 1st person, short. (New.)

REWRITE

HERE IS A MARSHALL PLAN FOR PRISONERS

The July issue of the Island LANTERN, inmate publication of the U.S. Penitentiary at McNeil Island, Steilacoom, Washington, contained a letter by Bill and discussion of a unique idea suggested to the inmates by him. A good deal of discussion had been aroused by editor F.J. Allman's argument that prisoners are released with so little money in hand & insufficient clothing, that it is very difficult for a man or woman to make an effective start at going straight. A number of the top prison officials and penologists, working seriously for real rehabilitation, recognized the truth of Mr. Allman's charge, but could come up with no solution.

Out of his practical experience in aiding handicapped and shut-in writers with the WCS Scholarship Fund, Bill suggested that prisoners at Steilacoom form a cooperative fund by contributing a voluntary sum from whatever money they have been able to save out of their earnings in prison. When a prisoner is released, he would have something to draw on. As he gets established he could repay whatever he had borrowed, and thus he would have a share in helping some other prisoner when he, too, is released. That is the way the WCS Fund functions, and we have been touched again and again by the responsibility assumed by some of the beneficiaries in so helping other writers worse off than themselves.

The Inter-Relations Committee has considered our suggestion twice and is hopeful of being able to draw up a plan it can advance to Federal Bureau of Prisons in Washington, D.C. It could be a major contribution to the whole movement of prisoner rehabilitation & crime prevention. At the very least, it has stirred the imagination of nearly 1,300 men of several races and creeds, showing them a way they can work together for their common good. Doing this, they are almost certain to attract more help from the free world than a single man without friends could dare hope for. A case of Alcoholics Anonymous repeated. We hope the idea really is practical, & if so, that it will spread from one prisoner to another, from one institution to others all over the country, indeed, the world.

We have dealt with this subject at length because we believe it offers a practical example of how writers can use their brains & pens to forge a better world. In the brilliant phrase of Mr. Keller, spiritual adviser of The Christophers, "You can change the world" by your small contribution. It's great to be a writer or teacher. To touch infinity. What are you waiting for?

THIS EDITOR IS OVERSTOCKED

FRIENDS, The Evangelical United Brethren Church, Otterbein Press, Dayton 2, Ohio, has sent back what its editor termed a good story recently, reporting, "We're overstocked, at present."

TO SELL, YOU HAVE TO FACE FACTS

Any writer who expects to sell consistently must face the job realistically. There's no sense in living in a dream world. No one ever ate by merely closing his eyes, crossing his fingers and walking under a ladder, while holding a 4-leaf clover. You have got to understand the conditions, and meet them as practically as possible. Only in that way are you likely to sell, if you send them right to the right editor at the right time.

The first lesson you need to learn, and it is a hard one, is that until you can really sell yourself, no one else will be interested in selling you. So many writers think if only they had a good agent, they'd be selling on a par with the big name writers they see in the big magazines month after month. They do not stop to think that those writers are (1) producing a large volume of sellable copy; (2) are able to ring the bell five or six times in every seven or eight. In other words, they not only produce stuff their agents can sell for a big price, but they do it more consistently than most big leaguers bat out hits. Until you are earning at least \$1,500 or \$2,000 a year (\$150 or \$200 at the usual 10% commission for the agent), you're not an attractive "horse" for a reputable agent to bet on. And that does not mean, say 50 sales at \$30 each either (Commission, \$3 a sale).

Look at it from the agent's angle. He is selling writers' stories to the big slicks, which today start at a minimum of \$700 each for short stories 3,000 words long or longer, and to the secondary markets, that probably pay \$200 or more as a minimum. When an editor pays such amounts as those, he wants to get some service from the agent, whom he expects to weed out the impossible or hopeless ms. It would be foolish, therefore, for an agent to go around peddling \$30 stories, in the hope that they just possibly might stick. Yet that is what the great majority of advertising "critic-agents" are doing, unless they know the score and cynically make their money by charging you large sums to revise your ms., and then holding them until you get tired of no results, and resolve to try another "agent". I know a number of reputable agents, who are not interested in even widely selling pulp writers, unless they're selling book lengths or serials. The reason is that at 1¢ a word, which most writers can collect for themselves, there just is not a living in it for the agent. The agents, who do handle pulp writers, do so because these writers form a back-log that pays their office overhead. Or they nurse a secret ambition to groom their pulp clients into slick writers; handling pulp allows them an easy, fairly short gamble that they can dig up new writers as replacements for the ones who die or go dry. But you can bet your bottom dollar that most of the agents, who advertise, who are interested in the non-selling writer, are not full time, successful agents; &

NEWSWITS

hence they are merely tolerated by editors. This being true, they are just not good for you later, when you are ready to hit the top or secondary markets. Be certain, too, that editors know the score. They view you carefully and with suspicion, when one of these "critic-agents" who peddle incompetent collaboration for a separate fee, bring you to their attention. Naturally, they will buy a story, if it suits their purpose and is well written. But your chances are a lot better, I can assure you surely, to come in via the slush pile until you can command the selling skill of a really respected agent. An irresponsible "critic-agent" can do a good young writer's reputation and future really irreparable harm.

The second lesson then, for a writer without what it takes to storm and conquer slick markets, is to learn to distinguish whether he's the type of writer, who should build his craftsmanship and reputation slowly in that great field or the small, low pay magazines or whether he should concentrate on learning to write for the big magazines alone. There are plenty of writers whose ideas are slick in approach. It is foolish for them to write homely little stories of entertainment. Yet they must recognize that it is "against the percentages" or ordinary probability, if in less than 5 years they begin to get checks. Every writer is a law unto himself. He has to learn to write, and he has to live sufficiently to have something to say. Some folks do either or both of these things almost overnight. With others, both tasks are slow and painful.

The third lesson for the upcoming writer, therefore, is to study markets. Study, study and study until he can tell why a story the editor used, but which he thinks is no darn good, is in there; until he can take a story apart and know why every scene is in it, and why scenes he would have used, are not. Until he really understands scene construction, the use of form and emotional dramatization of meaningful ideas. In a word, most of what it means to be a sensitive craftsman or a methodically producing professional big name writer of magazine fiction.

No writer was ever hurt by the hours that he spends pouring over market lists, trying to decide whether his latest story is likely to stand a chance in the office of small magazines he has never heard tell of before and whose requirements he can only guess at from the short, perfunctory write-up. That is one of the by-products we believe you'll get from reading the many small and seemingly unimportant changes in editorial thought or plans, which we report through our Central Market File, or in the columns of MONTHLY NEWSWITS. I know that I have never understood markets and how to hit them so well as in the last few months, since we have worked hard on the File. Even when you get a really competent agent selling you, you'll never regret the hours you've studied markets and

editors. That I promise you.

TWO MARKET ANALYSES

ORAL HYGIENE, Dr. Edward J. Ryan, 708 Church St., Evanston, Ill., has an unusual plan of paying \$100 for the best article published, each and every month. It is said that \$5,000 has thus been distributed. This is in addition to the usual word rate. "We want to know how the dental scene looks from your angle. If you or one of your colleagues has found a more efficient way to conduct a dental practice or a better way to utilize leisure, tell us the story in 1,300 words. Here are rules to follow:

- (1) Emphasize the dental angle.
- (2) Write your story in simple, direct, specific language without literary flourish.

Peacetime problems such as "The Dentist Has a Housing Problem, Too", "Black Market Dentistry", "The Present-Day Fee Problem" have all been handled. But stories have also been used on phases of the dental scene in South America, Europe, India, China, Canada, etc.

The Poetry Page, GOOD HOUSEKEEPING, Emerson Steff, 959 8th Ave., NYC IV, is still a good market for poetry. The July issue contained 6 poems, short and longer. They all were homely in their sentiment. The first, a natural woman's theme, depicted the average young grandmother surprised at her new role. The second was a charming picture of a wood road leading to an abandoned farm. The third was a swinging, romantic ballad about "Tintagel" on the Cornish coast. "Jumping Rope," a poem with a play on words, described amusingly a little girl with freckles across her nose, who grew up too fast. The fifth poem, a short one, compared mountains seen at twilight, with a pair of gracious ladies. The sixth was another play on words. Entitled, "Snapshot at the Beach", it was a mother exploring her 5-year old daughter's "hold that pose". But she desired to photograph with her memory as well as the camera, the child's expression of joy without fear. Each of these verses, no matter how seemingly casual, left you with something to think about, to remember—a bit of memorable and satisfying "experience". A good recipe for popular, saleable poetry in the big slick magazines.

AIR FACTS, Leighton Collins, Rockefeller Plaza, NYC 20, uses feature articles, which are slanted toward the private pilot. Pays quite well. Bernie Roth, who sold one to Mr. Collins recently, comments: "I sent it to him on Sunday night & got a check Thursday morning. Never saw a magazine work so fast. It's a little one, but darn well edited."

Please Note: this month we go to the 13th annual session of the UNW Conference. September issue of NEWSWITS has to be closed up before we leave on the 13th of August. So as is our custom, we'll cover the Conference in October. We'll try to get a lot of stuff.

Exclusive

Is a New Inflation Coming?

They tell us taxes are going up on account of the Korean War. Well, one way we can cut the burden a great deal is to stop the present ridiculous custom of allowing the bankers to make a huge profit out of our money. Why must one man pay for the war with his life while another gets paid interest on money he does not actually possess or loan to his nation? Let's take the banking profit out of both war and peace.

The issuing of money is a Federal monopoly. Only the government in Washington is empowered to do it. Yet when our government is in need of money, it goes to the banks, and borrows money the banks do not have. It borrows money it alone has the power to create and pays interest on it in addition! If you borrow money, the bank loans you part of the money it has on deposit. When that stockpile is exhausted, you must either try some other bank or go without.

But when the Government borrows, it gives a note and new money is printed and issued. By the Government, but the banks get interest for putting the Government's I.O.U. on to their books. And for years upon years we pay additional taxes to pay the interest on money the banks did not have to loan! It is said the Government is going to tighten the requirements for your buying homes, goods of all kinds, in order to lessen the danger of inflation. The real cause of inflation is a constantly expanding supply of this "bogus" money, which by government decree is stated to be "good". It is good only so long as you, the people, accept it and vote taxes to pay the artificial interest. But this continuous watering down of your money, making it constantly "thinner", like a weakened soup, is the real reason why your dollar bill is today worth only about 30¢ compared to a 1939 dollar in its ability to buy real goods. It will continue to decrease in value so long as this silly practice of managing money in favor of the bankers as against you, the stockholders of the United States of America, is perpetrated.

How can we raise this money, which everyone agrees must be raised to stop aggression and advance the hope of peace? There are several ways:

(1) Taxes. (That is pay-as-you-go. If people everywhere had to pay the cost of war as it is fought, there never would be any further wars. How would you like to pay tomorrow in cash your share of \$250,000,000,000?)

(2) "E" Bonds. The government could borrow directly from the people as it does now and again for a small portion of the total loan it makes to conduct its large affairs. Any interest it pays would then go to you. But you'd have to pay taxes to raise it. The i-

dea is simply to spread the cost of raising the money over a longer period of time, and thus make it less painful.

According to a State Department pamphlet, in Russia the Communists get all their money, aside from taxes, in this way. Either by loans bearing no interest, or "sweetened" by a lottery, so that a few people get a prize and the millions get nothing. (In 1947, the pill was made more bitter, by the Government deciding arbitrarily to "write off" a fairly large percentage of outstanding "loans". In effect this was confiscation of the people's money.)

(3) Thrift. If you voters would force politicians everywhere to stop the leaks due to inefficiency, waste and graft, there needn't be any great raise in taxes. According to a number of the Hoover Report recommendations it would not be difficult to save at least a large part of the \$5,000,000,000 the President is said to need.

This article may seem a surprising one for a writers' magazine. However, writers being paid for their work in dollars, not goods or services, have a vital stake in the preservation of the basic, all-time value of your American dollar. REWRITE believes there can be no more patriotic contribution to proper defense of our America dream of freedom and equal rights for all. These are merely a mirage and an intellectual absurdity, so long as we shackle ourselves and mortgage the future of our children with a debt we do not, and never should, owe. Billions of the debt now charged to our government, and hence to every American citizen, is of this false interest sort. Every year its accumulating, insidiously enslaving weight upon our national back grows more unjust and intolerable.

Now is the time to face this matter, & to do so squarely and honestly. It is part of a patriotic and vitally necessary job of putting our house in order. So that Democracy & the world of free men may long endure. Some can drive the slave concept of Communism, & all other false ideologies from this earth! Forever and ever. May the men who die in Korea not die in vain, as others have.

WRITE YOUR WAY AROUND TABOOS

We had an interesting letter from a writer the other day about the problem of taboo subjects in the juvenile field. He told about one story that was acceptable, but the editor had to turn it down because it had a dancing sequence in it, and this particular Sunday School paper does not mention the idea at all. "I took the hint," the author explained, "rewrote the story to omit the scene, and sold it." That's one way. A more serious problem is the one that opens the children's eyes to a situation they are not ready for. If it does more harm than good, the editor, often regretfully, has got to return it. We will discuss a specific example in September.